

APPROVED November 7, 2011  
Fair Housing Commission Minutes  
October 3, 2011  
Municipal Office Annex  
Conference Room B  
3:00 PM to 4:00 PM

**Present:** Kay Gant, Chair  
Nelson Zahler, Member  
Roger Wilson, Member  
Cherise Blackwell, Member

**Alderman:** Kelly Russell

**Staff:** Eileen Barnhard, Housing Programs Financial Specialist  
Saundra Nickols, City Attorney  
Joe Adkins, Deputy Director for Planning  
Matt Davis, Manager of Comprehensive Planning/Comm. Dev.

Meeting called to order by Kay Gant at 3:00 PM.

Motion to accept June Minutes by Roger Wilson, seconded by Nelson Zahler, all in favor to accept Minutes as presented.

I. Old Business

The Fair Housing Commission (Commission) is unclear on the reason why the Tenant/Landlord Handbook was not accepted by the Administration. Saundra Nickols, City Attorney explained the position of the Legal Department was this handbook was advising tenants of their rights which exceed the scope of authority of the Commission. She cited the Ordinance (Section 10, Appendix F- Housing Discrimination Ordinance) which defines the Commission's role which is to determine discrimination on housing.

Alderman Kelly Russell offered to check with other organizations whose mission is to promote Tenant's Rights and could benefit from the use of the handbook. Legal Aid is another consideration, which Kay Gant will look into.

Joe Adkins introduced Matt Davis, the new manager of Comprehensive Planning and Community Development.

Joe gave the Commission a sample survey of the Analysis of Impediments (AI) for review and comment. The previous AI was prepared by the Washington Council of Governments (Wash Cog) in 1996 and needs updating. He asked for input on distribution to groups and organizations willing to respond. The Commission will give reply to the survey with comment at the November 7, 2011 meeting.

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II. New Business

Alderman Russell presented to the Commission draft of language to include sexual orientation as protected classes for inclusion to the current ordinance to mirror COMAR law to amend the current Housing Discrimination Ordinance.

Commissioner Nelson Zahler asked for the definition of sexual orientation and City Attorney Saundra Nickols will research and provide a definition for consideration to include in the proposed Amendment.

The Commission will review the proposed draft to include sexual orientation and provide comment at the November 7, 2011 meeting.

Commission discussed legal requirement of meeting quorum of members when attendance is via conference call. Quorum requires three (3) of the five (5) members to participate with a staff member and must be held in a public office building.

Future events for the Commission to attend for educational outreach include the Convoy of Hope, In the Street, and National Night Out.

Discussion on the Annual Fair Housing Conference to take place in April to celebrate April as Fair Housing Month. Possible locations are the Municipal Office Annex or the Bernard Brown Community Room. Staff will find out availability and report back at the November 2011 meeting.

III. Motion to Adjourn made by Nelson Zahler, seconded by Roger Wilson, all in favor.

Next meeting November 7, 2011 3 PM, Municipal Office Annex, Conference Room B